

This Veterans Day, Congressman Sestak crisscrossed the 7th Congressional District and joined his constituents in honoring the service and sacrifice of the men and women who have answered the call to serve this nation. From visiting schools, to speaking at houses of worship, to attending Veterans Day ceremonies, Congressman Sestak made stops in every corner of the district, including a notable visit to the Bridgeport Ancient Order of the Hibernians Hall in Montgomery County, where he spoke to individuals gathered to honor the men and women who wore the cloth of this nation.

— “We have made the federal government more accountable for addressing Veterans needs,” said Congressman Sestak. “However, we all know that with statistics such as the fact that one in every four homeless Americans is a Vet, there is more to do. We cannot be satisfied as a country until Veterans and their families receive the benefits they have earned and the opportunity to build a successful life in the civilian world.”

The Congressman began the weekend by joining students from Scenic Hills Elementary School at a breakfast honoring veterans. Later Friday evening, the Congressman attended the Smedley D. Butler Detachment No. 742 Marine Corps Ball, held in honor of the Corps’ 233 Birthday. The Congressman addressed Marines and their family members, and spoke of the “sisterhood and brotherhood” of all men and women who have fought to protect our freedoms.

“It is a bond that stands the eternal test of time, and finds the grandest sepulcher of all—a home in the hearts of brave men and women,” Congressman Sestak said. “To me, Veterans Day is an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifices of those who have gone before me, and to redouble my efforts to ensure that Veterans past, present, and future are honored by thought and action for the freedoms they and their families have earned for us all.”

On Saturday, the Congressman addressed his American Legion Post, Post 227, at an informal social gathering and thanked the members for their service and commitment to honoring our nation’s Veterans. The Congressman also paid a visit to the American Legion Post in Norwood, where he met with members and listened to their concerns.

On Sunday the Congressman continued his district-wide tour by speaking at a Veterans Day breakfast at Suburban Jewish Community Center B'nai Aaron Synagogue in Havertown to a group of congregants on the contributions of the Jewish American Community to our armed forces. In particular, he told the story Rabbi Alexander Goode, a chaplain aboard the USAT Dorchester, a troop carrier sailing off the coast of Greenland in February 1943. A torpedo fired from a German submarine shattered the starboard side of the ship. In the panic and confusion that followed, Rabbi Goode and his fellow chaplains helped to bring calm—distributing life vests, including their own, to the survivors.

From there, he proceeded to the DelCo Cruisers “Salute the Troops” fundraiser at Rose Tree

Park in Media, where he spoke about the importance of providing the necessary tools to both our active personnel as well as our veterans. Later that evening, the Congressman spoke at a Community Interfaith Tribute to Veterans at the Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral in Philadelphia.

On Monday, Congressman Sestak participated in Ridley Park High School's "Take a Vet to School" program where he delivered an address to the entire student body before visiting individual classrooms to share his experiences as a veteran. He also participated in a similar program at the Great Valley High School in Chester County. Later, he spoke to employees at Crozer Keystone Medical Center in Upland about the contributions of veterans to our society, particularly the contributions of veterans to the Crozer Chester community.

Congressman Sestak kicked off Veterans Day with an early morning breakfast with the Boy Scouts of Chester County, where the Congressman spoke to scouts and their families about the importance of service. From there, he proceeded to the Boeing plant in Ridley Park, where he delivered remarks to employees there about his time in the military and the sacrifices of all veterans. From there, he moved west to Aston for a Veterans Day Ceremony. At the event, participants ceremonially burned damaged flags and spoke about our nation's four generations of veterans.

One of the highlights of the weekend for Congressman Sestak was marching in the Media Veterans Day parade alongside former service members from throughout Delaware County in addition to Harry Kalas and the Phillie Phanatic. The theme of the parade was "Women in the Military throughout the Years" with Rear Admiral (Ret.) Rosanne M. LeVitre serving as the grand marshal.

"I can not convey my gratitude for the opportunity to be here today and acknowledge the service of the men and women who defended this nation," said Congressman Sestak. "We owe a debt of gratitude to them and to their families for their immeasurable sacrifices. Over 30 years ago, I was entrusted with the greatest honor—to lead America's sons and daughters into battle—and I stand before you today to thank them for their service."

Congressman Sestak wound down the day by returning to the Ancient Order of the Hibernians Hall in Bridgeport, Montgomery County, where he was the keynote speaker at their Veterans Day ceremony. Following a pipe band procession and invocation by Fr. Andy McCormack, chaplain of the AOH Notre Dame Division, the Congressman spoke to a crowd of over one hundred Montgomery County Veterans and their families before returning to Media to speak at the Delaware County Council's ceremony at the Town House.

"I was grateful for the opportunity to interact with so many of my fellow Veterans this weekend," said Congressman Sestak. "While we have made a great deal of progress in aiding our nations Veterans, such as passing the GI Bill, the largest increase in education benefits since WW2, or passing the greatest increase in funding for the VA in its 77 year history, there remains much to be done. On this Veterans Day, I want to thank all those who have served this nation and offer a reminder that our debt to these men and women is the most important we will ever owe."

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.

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